more or less

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/10551164.

Rating:	Mature
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandom:	Hannibal (TV)
Relationship:	Will Graham/Hannibal Lecter
Characters:	Will Graham, Hannibal Lecter
Additional Tags:	Alpha/Beta/Omega Dynamics, Alpha Hannibal Lecter, Omega Will Graham, Bonding, Claiming Bites, Don’t copy to another site
Language:	English
Collections:	Cannibals In Love
Stats:	Published: 2017-04-05 Completed: 2017-12-09 Words: 6,696 Chapters: 7/7

more or less

by acheforhim

Summary

Will imprints on Lecter as soon as he meets him.

Notes

please do NOT write a/b/o without the slashes, that’s an ethnic slur. either use the slashes or use “omegaverse” or another term you’re comfortable with.

Chapter 1

Will does not want to name whatever it is that he feels the first time he meets Hannibal Lecter's gaze.

He knows what it is. He hasn't felt that shift inside himself before, didn't think he'd ever feel it in his life, and yet he recognizes it. He feels drawn to the Alpha in a way that can't be explained, that only omegas can truly comprehend. There is a warmth in his chest and his hands itch to reach out and touch the alpha, touch his skin and hair and *feel*. He grips his mug tighter and clenches his jaw, tries to hold his tongue. It works, more or less. He doesn't snap as hard as he wants to, manages to only let his indignation show while everything else boils under the surface.

When he leaves Crawford's office it is a relief and a resignation.

The same resignation weighs heavy in his chest that night as his hands move on their own, arranging rough blankets in a nest he hasn't really needed until now. He settles in and squeezes his eyes shut, tries to fool his body into thinking that is, indeed, his Alpha's warmth he feels around him.

It works.

More or less.

x

I don't find you that interesting.

It's not a lie. Will isn't sure whether Lecter is drawn to him, too, whether it's an instinct to provide for Will that leads him to his doorstep. If he really cares for Will, if he's trying to court him, that's nothing new. He has refused others' advances before. Hannibal doesn't make any explicit suggestion, though, so Will hopes his remark will keep things that way.

He's surprised when the promise he gets in reply he gets does not irritate him, stirs something in his belly instead.

You will.

x

Abigail makes sense.

The more time he spends around the alpha, the safer the Doctor's office feels. He tells Lecter things he would not dare utter in front of others, and Lecter listens, understands. The support he shows wraps warm around Will, and the omega in him revels in what it thinks is affection. After years of solitude the attention feels like worship and it's a shelter from everything that he has to face at work and when he is alone at night. It's only natural that his paternal

instincts would awake, as well, spurred on by the guilt he feels for killing her father. It makes sense that he would want to keep her safe.

Will doesn't know if Lecter is aware of the effect he has on him. He doesn't make a move, doesn't say anything that would put Will in a position where he would have to admit his feelings out loud. He is the perfect gentleman.

And then he goes on and fucking *scents* him.

He does it with the usual grace he displays in every movement and Will freezes. They manage to make light of the situation but Will excuses himself soon after, goes straight back home to his dogs. He doesn't think much of Hannibal's action but more of his own reaction to it, the way his head twitched to the side before he could stop it, the way he wanted to bare his neck and have his alpha nuzzle into his skin.

He is consumed with work after that, doesn't see Hannibal much, only discusses the cases with him when he does. He is too tired to feel lonely at night, and soon things go back to normal and he doesn't feel as awkward around Hannibal anymore

And then.

Tobias Budge.

Chapter 2

Tobias Budge changes everything.

Will thought it would be Alana. Gorgeous, capable, safe Alana—her lips felt so wonderful against his. He thought kissing her would somehow shift his feelings from Hannibal to her, help him distance himself from the alpha, focus on someone who actually wants him.

And yet.

Yet.

The first thing he does after the kiss is tell Hannibal about it. He hates himself when he does it, knowing he wants to draw a reaction from him, to make him jealous. Shame fills him when he gets none of the sort, Hannibal remaining professional as they discuss the matter. Then he mentions Budge and Will goes after him—and they fight—and—

"I was worried you were dead."

I know, Will wants to say. *I know.*

He *feels* the urgency in Hannibal's eyes, the relief, the yearning. He lightly sways towards Hannibal as if pulled by a string but he manages to keep still for a moment, keep aware of Jack and everyone else roaming about the office, no matter how far away they seem as Will keeps his eyes on his Alpha. He clenches his fists as he resists the urge to drop to his knees and pull Hannibal closer and let him scent Will again, let him make sure he is alive and well and *there*. Will wants to have Hannibal's arms around himself and hold on to him and just stay, close and warm and quiet.

But Hannibal still doesn't say anything, so Will resists.

"You killed him?" Jack asks.

When Hannibal answers in the affirmative, a voice inside Will's head whispers, *He did it for you*. Will stifles it and lets himself move closer only when Jack walks away, perching on Hannibal's desk to continue their quiet conversation. Too much goes unsaid yet again, but Hannibal's gaze is still open and vulnerable, and he's still shaken—they both are—so Will keeps quiet.

But now he knows. He hopes.

x

Alana's voice is kind when she says, "I can't just have an affair with you."

An *affair*? Why would she use that word—why—

"Why?"

“Because I can feel that you belong with someone else.”

Will swallows.

“I will happily remain your friend, but anything else would only hurt the both of us, Will.”

He can only nod. Her gentle embrace is the most comforting thing he has felt in years.

x

“We are her fathers now.”

He keeps—he keeps *saying* these things, but none of it is what Will wants to hear. He puts his hand on Will’s shoulder but doesn’t slide it to his neck, doesn’t gentle him, doesn’t pull him closer and tuck him under his chin. It’s all Will wants from him, and he *knows* Hannibal wants it too, but he does nothing.

And Will’s nights are getting worse.

Blankets aren’t enough anymore. He tries to bury himself in their warmth, whines as it doesn’t feel right, cries deep into the night. His pack gather around him and nuzzle into the parts of him they can reach, their whines echoing his, but it’s a small comfort.

It is not enough.

x

Hannibal’s eyes are attentive when he asks, “What do you feel like?”

I feel like I’m yours.

x

Alana’s gaze is concerned when she notes, “You’re really warm.”

Fuck.

Chapter 3

It comes as no surprise when Will calls to cancel his appointment, “just in case". He says something about some case or other and Hannibal says it’s no trouble, wishes him good luck, even though they both know what the real reason behind his absence will be. Hannibal had smelt the heat on him, sweet and heady, and imagined how dear Will would be dealing with it, alone in his home in Wolf Trap. There’s a chance it will let up before the time of his appointment comes, and it is very telling of Will’s expectations of it that he made sure his whole week is free.

That’s why Hannibal is taken aback when the door to his office crashes open just as he gets up from his desk, ready to leave. He sees Will stumble over the threshold and rushes towards him, offering his arms as support when Will takes a wobbly step inside the office.

Will looks up at him and grins. “Hey,” he greets cheerfully, and Hannibal turns his head to the side by an inch when Will’s breath washes over his face, hot and alcoholic.

Hannibal suppresses a laugh. “Did you kiss Alana Bloom again?” he asks, and has to chuckle this time when Will looks downright offended at the question.

“Why would I do that?” he asks, indignant, and doesn’t let go of Hannibal once he starts walking him towards the chaise.

“I seem to recall you deeming her very kissable,” Hannibal reminds him.

Will shrugs. “She doesn’t think the same of me.” He sits down and Hannibal sits next to him, waits for Will to reveal the reason he has decided to come to him after getting drunk, if there is one at all. Will just rubs his eyes and then blinks up at him, his eyes venturing down to look Hannibal over. “You always wear these suits,” he says, the statement almost an accusation.

“I do,” is Hannibal’s simple reply. He waits for Will to continue, but then he just lies down on the chaise and throws an arm over his eyes. He’s silent for a while before he speaks again.

“I had this teacher. Hot,” he says, lips pulled in a little smile, and Hannibal raises an eyebrow, even though Will can’t see him. “Always wore suits, like you.” He sighs. “Got so wet when I saw him in a t-shirt and jeans,” he says, the embodiment of casual. He turns on his side afterwards and tucks his hand under his cheek, already asleep.

Hannibal watches him for a moment longer, then shakes his head and gets up. He gets a blanket and throws it over Will, almost regretting not being gentler when Will opens his eyes again.

“Alpha.” The soft whisper makes Hannibal freeze.

They stare at each other for a long minute, Will seemingly unaware of the exact effect the word had on Hannibal. Hannibal drops to his knees next to Will’s head and searches his eyes,

wonders if Will meant to say that to him, or if he's seeing someone else in his intoxicated state.

Will raises a hand and puts it on Hannibal's head, the gesture more a petting one than a loving caress. Indignation rises in Hannibal at the thought of Will seeing something similar to one of his dogs in Hannibal, but then Will frowns and his hand lifts. He doesn't take it back and Hannibal can't see exactly what it's doing, but he feels it draw in the air over him, as if touching something that's suspended in the air or rising from his skull.

"What do you see, Will?" Hannibal asks and Will startles when he hears his voice, meets his eyes fearfully.

"You," Will whispers, wonder in his voice. "You've never been so close before," he continues, hand lowering to carss Hannibal's jaw. He looks as if he's seeing Hannibal for the very first time.

Hannibal nods. "Get some rest," he says, and Will nods, wide eyes appraising him before he manages to relax.

Hannibal gets a blanket for himself and settles in his chair for the night.

x

Will wakes up with a start.

He remembers his heat taking over him. He remembers thinking of Hannibal, then thinking it would never end, then not thinking at all.

He remembers waking in the hours after, somehow connecting the dots. He remembers a glass of whisky becoming a glass too many, then hitching a ride with a sympathetic omega that wanted to help him get to his alpha safely, unknowing that Will wasn't exactly sure what he would do to *his alpha* once he saw him.

He remembers...

He sits up and looks around, and his heart races when his eyes find Hannibal. His suit is wrinkled after a night that Will knows has been uncomfortable. He wonders whether he should wake him but then Hannibal stirs on his own and opens his eyes, sitting up straighter when he sees Will looking at him.

"Hey," Will says, voice quiet.

"Good morning, Will," Hannibal says and runs a hand through his hair.

"That doesn't look very comfortable," Will says, voice remorseful, and Hannibal gives him a smile.

"No worries," he replies. "You did not seem in the mood to move, and I did not want you to wake up alone." Will opens his mouth to apologize, but Hannibal doesn't give him the chance. He stands up and stalks closer to him. "Do you remember last night at all?"

Looking up at him, Will remembers touching him. *I felt your antlers underneath my fingers.*

“Vaguely,” he answers, swallows with difficulty.

Are you really what I think you are?

Hannibal gives him a little smile and reaches a hand towards him. “Would you join me for breakfast?”

Will takes it and lets Hannibal pull him to his feet. “Sure,” he says, and watches Hannibal as he heads for the door.

Will follows him and thinks of all the omegas he’s met before, all the spouses, the siblings, the parents and children of alphas who were killers. He remembers the storm of feelings going through them: attachment fighting disappointment, indignation squabbling with shame, love struggling against fear. He remembers feeling sick with it, feeling grateful that he’d never have to experience it for himself.

Real fuckin’ grateful.

Chapter 4

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The next few weeks are a mess. *Will* is a mess. He has no idea what to do and in the time it's taking him to figure it out he does nothing, making guilt weave into the jumble of feelings that has him yearning for some time to rest. He barely eats and it makes Hannibal fuss over him in his non-fussy way, quiet but devoted in his care. It would have made Will swoon if he wasn't debating whether he'd like to keep Hannibal close to himself or have him locked away for as long as he lives.

What would I have done if I hadn't imprinted on him?

The answer comes easy: *get him.*

He would have lured him in. He sees himself do it, give nothing away as waits for his chance to expose Hannibal for the monster that he is. He sees himself do everything it takes to make Hannibal believe he's on his side, to earn his trust so he can turn it into a weapon. He sees himself succeed.

He also sees how similar that entire process would be to a courtship.

Will has to admit it to himself: a courtship is what he *wants*. He wants to finally let himself act on his attraction, have Hannibal reciprocate, have them claim each other for everyone to see. He wants to be next to his Alpha, wake up to him and come home to him, have them build a world the two of them can retreat to, everyone else be damned. He knows he can never have this, though. He knows that if he sees the similarities between seduction and hunt, then Hannibal will, too. It would be too easy for him to reach the wrong conclusion and decide to wrap his hand around Will's neck not to gentle, but to harm.

Will is not going to seduce, then. He'll submit.

In-between trying to throw Jack off the Ripper's scent—and fuming whenever Hannibal decides to drop one of the jokes Will *only now* understands are allusions to what he has done—and trying to nurse himself back to relative health, Will... flirts. It can probably be called that.

He is as subtle as he can. He tries to meet Hannibal's eyes more often and it feels too awkward, makes him bite his lips and look away too often. He feels ridiculous right until he catches Hannibal stare at the bare skin of his neck, eyes snapping back to Will's just a moment too late. It makes Will's cheeks warm, and he knows that's working in his favor, too, appearing the coy and excitable omega. He swallows, feeling equal parts embarrassed and powerful, and goes on to talk about the case as if he hasn't noticed anything.

Next, he tries a new blocker that is lighter and lets his own scent come through. It's not overpowering, probably won't affect anyone else around him at all, but Will knows Hannibal

will be able to tell the difference. It thrills him to no end to see his Alpha's eyes darken for a moment, and it takes all he has not to bury his face in his neck and scent *him*.

He thinks he's doing quite well, considering. Hannibal still makes no move, but he clearly appreciates the attention, and Will doesn't mind giving it.

It takes him a while to realize that Hannibal *is* responding, every crime scene he leaves a love letter, a feast, a symphony. It makes Will dizzy, overwhelmed; he knows he needs to up his game if he wants to have any chance of giving back as much as he's received. He needs a final grand gesture to bring the courting to an end.

He thinks he has it all figured out. And then Abigail disappears.

He listens to Jack lay it out for him, layer the profile of the Ripper they have built over what they know of Hannibal. Will knows that he's right, and the fact that he hasn't done enough to cover for his Alpha makes him feel sick to his stomach. It probably shows on his face as Jack gives him a sympathetic look and says something about friendship, about Hannibal fooling them all. Will nods and replies quietly, tries to pull himself together when Jack's gaze turns evaluative.

"What do we do?" Will asks.

"I'm meeting him for dinner tonight. I suggest you join us."

"I wasn't invited," Will murmurs.

"Invite yourself, then," Jack says, and Will chuckles without humor.

"He would find that very rude."

"I have a feeling he won't mind it coming from you." When Will frowns, Jack continues: "Come on, Will. You've seen the way he looks at you."

"I don't..."

"You're attractive, an omega, and you've got just the mind to keep him busy. You're probably his dream come true."

"Thanks," Will murmurs, doing his best not to puff his chest out at the mere notion of being what his Alpha needs. He glances at the clock on the wall. "I'm supposed to leave for my appointment in a bit. I'm his last patient for the day."

Jack nods. "You can go home with him, wait for me. We should be able to take him—"

He goes on and Will nods and nods, yearning to get out of the office and to his Alpha soon. The thought of going along with Jack's plan crosses his mind. He knows he can do it, he knows that he *should,* and he spends the drive to Hannibal's office trying not to lose himself to panic.

When Hannibal opens the door, Will breaks.

He shortens the distance between them and wraps his arms around Hannibal, holds him close. He feels Hannibal freeze before he relaxes again and his hands slide up Will's back.

"Will?" he inquires, and Will whimpers.

He could do it. He could admit his feelings now and attack him later, overpower him with Jack's help, do the world a favor.

He buries his face in the crook of Hannibal's neck, for the first and last time, and tears fill his eyes.

"They know," he whispers. He pulls away to look at him. "Hannibal, they know."

Understanding sets on Hannibal's face and his hands slide up to Will's neck. Will closes his eyes and waits, but then Hannibal cups his cheeks, thumbs wiping the tears away. "You knew?" he asks, voice soft but demanding. Will nods. "You kept my secret. Why?"

The laughter chokes Will on its way out. "You're my Alpha," he says, the words bittersweet on his tongue. Hannibal's eyebrows rise in surprise, and Will shakes his head. He can't resist scenting Hannibal's wrist, eyes closing again for a moment. The feeling of comfort that tries to fill him is tainted by the dread looming over them. "I know you don't want me. It's okay." *It's not.* "You need to run."

"Come with me," Hannibal says, and it hurts Will to shake his head.

"I need to stay. Distract them somehow, buy you time. I'll think of something."

"Do you have any ideas?"

"I thought... I thought a bond would mess procedures up. But if I bite you, they'll figure out it was me, lock us both up. If you bite me, I go into heat. We don't have time for it."

Hannibal looks at him for a long moment. "I should have claimed you sooner," he says quietly, and Will can't resist leaning in for a kiss.

He touches their foreheads together afterwards. "You need to go," he says again, and Hannibal nods, but doesn't pull away.

He leans into Will's neck to breathe him in, and Will buries his fingers in Hannibal's hair, lets him have his fill. He imagines a time, one day, in another world, when he could let Hannibal claim him with no fear of anyone or anything.

And then Hannibal bites down.

Chapter End Notes

is hannibal gonna take care of will or be his usual terrible self vote now on your phones

Chapter 5

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Will wakes up with the breaking of the door.

He winces and keeps his eyes closed, tries to block out the presence of the people storming into the room. He tries to take deep breaths and feels a bit better by the time he hears someone call his name.

“Will?”

Jack.

He wants to reply, but then the scent of alpha who is not his own fills his nostrils and he whines, buries his face in whatever cloth is placed underneath his head.

“Son of a bitch,” he hears Jack murmur, but then he recognizes the smell of Hannibal on the fabric and focuses on breathing it in until he relaxes. “Beverly, I need you here!”

There are more voices, and then a gentle hand to his cheek. “Will?” Beverly says. “Let’s get you up, come on.”

He is pulled upright and he finally opens his eyes. He is in Hannibal’s office, on his chaise, and Jack is standing in front of him with an expression somewhere between anger and concern. Will tries to reach and get the hair out of his face, and only then realizes his hands are tied behind his back. He makes a noise and Beverly reaches to help him, but Jack holds up a hand to stop her.

“I want to hear what happened, first.”

“Jack, you can’t possibly think—”

“I want to hear what Will has to say, then I’ll tell you what I think,” Jack insists, but his voice isn’t unkind. He gives Will an expectant look and Beverly wraps an arm around Will’s shoulders in support.

“He bit me,” Will finally whispers.

“I can see that,” Jack says, nodding towards the mark that is surely gracing Will’s neck. Will inclines his head and rubs his cheek on his shoulder in a feeble attempt to cover it.

“Jack, he bit me,” he repeats, feels panic fill him. *He left me, he bit me and he left me, he—*

“It’s okay, Will, you’re okay,” Beverly says, holding him closer and letting her calming scent wash over him. “It’s not your fault. He did this to you. He is dangerous, but you did nothing to attract him.”

Will looks up at Jack, and doesn't say anything. They both know Jack specifically instructed him to make himself attractive to a murderer, and Jack shifts his weight slightly, the only giveaway that he feels guilty about what transpired. Both he and Beverly seem to think that Will is only upset because it happened, not because he was abandoned afterwards, and he decides to make that work in his favor.

"We were just talking," he starts slowly, taking his time to choose his truth. "I was standing next to the window, looking out. I heard him coming up to me. It was nothing unusual, I thought he'd just stand next to me. But then he wrapped his arms around me and I—I was just surprised. Scared, maybe," he says, letting his voice waver. "And he just... Did it. Before I could react." He takes a deep breath. "I remember him carrying me here, then things get kinda hazy." That much is true, at least.

"You should be in heat right now," Jack notes. "Why are you not?"

Will frowns and tries to think. "He... He gave me a sedative," he remembers, and nods towards his arm. Beverly rolls up his sleeve and nods to Jack when she sees where Hannibal injected the drug. "He wanted to stall it. Slow me down."

"But why?" Beverly asks. "No offence, Will, I'm glad you're okay, but why didn't he just knock you out, hurt you, even kill you? Why claim you?"

"Because he wanted to," Will says simply. He hopes he sounds disturbed, disgusted. He hopes the sudden faith he has in his Alpha doesn't show. "He wanted to have me, and he wanted to know where I was. I can't take a suppressant because it wouldn't react well with the sedative. He knows you wouldn't let me go home because I'd be a suspect. You have to send me to a clinic for the rest of the week." He can already feel warmth spread over his skin.

"He's planning to take you away once your heat is over," Jack supposes.

"Probably," Will admits. There's no use lying about it. He might be able to hide a few things, but Jack isn't stupid.

"We're not letting him do that," Jack decides. He signals for everyone else to leave the room, then motions towards Will's hands and Beverly does quick work of cutting the tie. Will rubs his wrists and gives them both a nod, grateful. "We underestimated him today. I'm not making that mistake again, but I do need to ask something of you, Will."

"You wanna use me as bait," Will says, and Jack nods. "I get it. I'll do it."

"Will—"

"It's okay, Bev," he assures her, patting her hand. Her concern is truly touching, and he feels an inkling of guilt, knowing he'll soon betray her. "He clearly wants me, if only because I'm an omega. It's worth the shot." *And if I'm lucky, that will be the last you see of me.*

Beverly hesitates, but then she nods. "What do we do?"

“We arrest Will. Not right away; his heat is about to overtake him,” he says, and Will looks away. “When the worst of it is over, we make a big fuss about evidence found in his home, connecting him to the Ripper cases. We drag him out of the hospital while Hannibal knows he’s still vulnerable, and if we’re lucky he comes to protect his own. Sound good?” he asks, and Will nods.

“We need Freddie Lounds,” he says. “One of her articles will be quick to spread the word.”

“I’ll make arrangements,” Jack says. “We need to make sure you’re comfortable, now.”

“Come on,” Beverly says and helps him to his feet.

“Um, Bev?” He hesitates before he voices his request, hopes it would gain him sympathy rather than suspicion. “Can I take the coat?” he asks, pointing to the jacket that was bundled under his head. He doesn’t have anything else that bears Hannibal’s scent.

Beverly looks to Jack and when he nods, she takes the coat and drapes it over Will’s shoulders. He breathes the scent in and squeezes his eyes shut, hoping he appears guilty rather than yearning.

“Will,” Jack says and Will looks at him. “I’m sorry he did this to you. We’ll get the bastard, and with time, the bond will fade.”

“I know,” Will says. “I’ll be fine.” Jack nods.

Will walks away with Beverly’s support, wondering if he would really be okay if Hannibal did not show up.

Chapter End Notes

next chapter will probably be the last (at least plot-wise, dunno if you guys might want something additional) but sorry if it takes a while, life is hell!

thank you so much for the comments on the previous chapter, i did not expect to get so many, you guys are the best :)

Chapter 6

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

He is completely exhausted by the time the worst of it is over, the heat being forced so close to the one he previously had

He misses home, misses his dogs, but he is grateful to have kind nurses help him clean up. They feed him and keep him company and let him cry all over them whenever he remembers *his daughter,* even if he can't tell them who his daughter was or what happened to her. He's embarrassed to face them once he feels better, but they say nothing, and he remembers the essence of their occupation and the fact that they have probably seen much worse than his display.

Jack comes over to check on him and lets him know Freddie's article has been put online.

"Are you well enough to let us drag you out of here?"

"Yeah," Will says, voice quiet. "Did you find Abigail yet?"

Jack shakes his head and Will closes his eyes. They're quiet for a while.

"How did he know, Will?"

Will's eyes snap open and he frowns in confusion. "What?"

"How did he know that we would try and get him?"

Will opens his mouth, closes it again. "I don't... I don't know."

"Will..."

"I don't *know,* Jack," Will snaps. "We didn't have time to chat between him fucking bonding me to him and putting me to sleep."

"But he must have known," Jack insists.

"Yeah, he must have," Will says, glaring at him, and Jack's eyebrows rise at the silent accusation. Will grits his teeth and looks away. "Could you let me get some rest? I'm getting arrested tomorrow."

Jack huffs, half-irritated, half-amused, and leaves the room. Will takes a breath and squeezes his eyes shut, feeling way too tired suddenly.

When he wakes, there is someone working rapidly to the side of his bed. They don't look like a doctor and Will tries to recall if he has something resembling a weapon nearby. He is about to feel his way to the bedside table when he catches the person's scent.

"...Abigail?"

They freeze and turn to him. He thinks he got it wrong for a second, but then he recognizes that it *is* her. Her hair is short and ruffled, the bottom of her face - covered by a scarf. She pulls it down and smiles at him. "Hey, Dad."

"*Abigail,*" he chokes out and reaches for her, and she laughs as she leans in for an awkward hug. "What are you—"

"No time to explain," she cuts him off and steps away. He manages to lift his head and sees she's gathering what little possessions Beverly brought him in his bag. "Think you can walk?"

"Probably," he says. "Might be a bit slow."

"That's okay," she says, "we're gonna have to be quiet, anyway."

"Where are we going?" he asks, and she gives him an amused look.

"Where do you think?" she asks and gestures for him to sit up. He does so slowly and she helps him get on his feet.

"He sent you, then?"

"Of course he did." She offers nothing else and Will sighs.

"I thought he had hurt you," he says, and she huffs.

"He would never," she says, voice firm, and he has to laugh. "He wouldn't," she insists. "He knows how much I mean to you, and you mean a lot to him."

He could believe that.

It's embarrassingly easy for them to sneak out of the hospital and into an ambulance. By the time Will climbs in the passenger's seat he's sweating with the effort.

"Wanna rest in the gurney in the back?" Abigail offers and he huffs.

"No, thanks," he says and she grins, then closes his door and goes around to get in the driver's seat. "How did you get those keys, anyway?" he says.

"Don't ask," is all she says, so he doesn't. He doesn't ask where they're going, just closes his eyes and leans his head back, enjoys being in her company.

"What happened, Abigail?" he asks after a while, turning to regard her profile.

Her gloved hands squeeze the wheel. "Nick Boyle attacked me," she says, and Will tenses. "I defended myself."

Will relaxes only by a fraction. “You killed him?” he asks, and after a moment’s hesitation she nods. “Good,” Will says, and Abigail lets out a deep breath.

“I got scared,” she admits. “I went to Hannibal for help. Someone must have seen us together before I went away. Hannibal says that’s how Crawford must have found out.”

“Just from a single witness’ report?”

“I don’t know. Do you think he knew something else?”

Will shrugs. “I don’t know. I put it together, maybe he did, as well.”

“He’s not you, Dad,” she says, and his chest clenches at hearing the title again.

“Don’t run away again,” he pleads, “not without us.”

Abigail smiles. “He made me promise that already,” she says. “I won’t,” she promises again, just in case, and Will manages a small smile. “That’s him,” Abigail says and his heart jumps as he turns to look at the road again.

Abigail pulls over close to the only car that’s stopped at the side of the road. Will unbuckles his seatbelt with trembling hands and he sees his door open just as he turns to it. He stumbles out and right into Hannibal’s arms and holds onto him as fast as he can, all the pain and despair of the past week seeping out of him when his Alpha’s scent fills him.

“Will,” Hannibal says, with feeling, and Will whimpers, buries his face in his neck.

They stay like that until the night air makes Will shiver. Hannibal pulls away and slips his jacket off, wraps it around Will. Will is about to thank him when he sees that Hannibal is wearing not one of his suits but a simple t-shirt and goddamned *jeans*. It’s a good cover, he supposes; combined with the facial hair he’s let grow out, Hannibal looks nothing like himself. But it *is* Hannibal, as casual as he has probably ever been in his life, and he has never looked more *alpha* to Will.

“You *bastard,*” Will whispers, putting his hand on Hannibal’s chest, and Hannibal laughs. He brings Will’s hand to his lips and presses a small kiss to it.

“I have missed you, too,” he says, and Will is grateful the car’s headlights are not allowing him to take a better look at his Alpha and fully appreciate him. His heat isn’t completely over and he feels like taking a few to seat himself on his Alpha’s knot would not be quite appropriate, given the situation, as well as his foster daughter’s presence.

“Are you done?” Abigail says, trying to sound bored, but Will can hear how pleased she is.

Will feels himself flush as he tries to keep his arousal at bay. “Yeah, yes. We—where are we going?”

“Somewhere far away,” Hannibal says, and Will rolls his eyes at the vagueness. “Are you sure you want this?” Hannibal asks.

Will's hand reaches up to the mark on his throat. "Yeah," he says, voice firm. "I'm coming with you."

Hannibal reaches for him, and Will's hand falls away as Hannibal's fingers trace the mark in turn. Will eyes Hannibal's throat as he tilts his head to the side and Hannibal notices, raises an eyebrow.

"I don't wanna bite you now," Will assures him. "I'm not that cruel."

Hannibal's gaze holds no remorse. "Not that *kind* of cruel, perhaps." There's a fondness in his voice that Will knows he shoud fear, despise, but he feels it fill his chest with warmth, instead. "You didn't tell me you'd imprinted on me."

"What would that have changed?" Will asks.

"Everything," Hannibal says, voice firm.

Will squeezes his eyes shut for a moment. *And I thought you didn't want me.* "Let's go," he says, voice quiet.

Hannibal nods and the three of them get in the car, the backseat already made into a bed for Will. He snuggles in and looks at Abigail, smiles at her when she looks back at him. She is here, his daughter, alive and well, next to his mate.

They're together and they will never be apart again.

Will closes his eyes, peaceful, knowing that's enough.

Chapter End Notes

I FORGOT TO MENTION WHAT HAPPENS WITH THE DOGS but alana will take good care of them i promise!!!

thank u for reading this i love u

Bonus: Hannibal's POV

Chapter Summary

not a continuation of the story but a retelling of some bits

Chapter Notes

someone requested hannibal's POV a while ago and life has been tough so i really wanted to return to this story's loving arms for a little bit. i was hoping it'd bring me back to hannibal fic cause honestly i'm yearning to write more but i can't come up with anything exciting lmao

hope yall are doing ok & enjoy this, even if it's not much at all

Will Graham is an angry little thing.

Hannibal already knows that the man is always on his guard, but he can tell that there is something that makes him retreat even further into himself the moment that they meet.

It definitely isn't lack of confidence in the presence of two alphas. He is about the same height as Hannibal and Crawford, and he makes attempt to fill the room with his presence in any obvious way, but there is a quiet confidence in the way he carries himself that instantly draws one's attention. Hannibal is delighted when his little jab at Will avoiding eye contact leads him to utter a little speech about it, direct and passionate and *irritated.* He is so expressive in everything he does, in everything he doesn't do, and Hannibal is almost grateful when he leaves, indignant, and gives him a moment to decide on what to do next.

Because, Hannibal quickly realizes, he could do *so much.*

x

Witnessing people try his cooking for the first time never gets old, and seeing Will delight in it despite himself makes it all the more thrilling.

On the outside Will can seem so distant; so entangled into others' emotions that he could hardly *reach* his own, let alone share them with anyone. But it is so clear to Hannibal, so clear it almost hurts, how Will yearns to be close to someone else. To be known for once, and seen, and *felt*.

He opens up to Hannibal with little to no resistance, just because Hannibal gives him the opportunity. He doesn't agree with Hannibal's assessment that he will soon have an interest in him, probably disregarding it as something a lesser alpha would throw at him as a flirtation.

Hannibal, however, does not miss the fact that he does not protest it, either.

x

He does not even think of the implications of it when he goes to scent Will.

He tells the truth when Will confronts him about it. Part of it, at least.

Will has been getting more comfortable around him, and it has made him that more appealing to the alpha in Hannibal. He has managed not to dwell on it, but Will's scent somehow fights its way through the blockers and manages to stir something deep in Hannibal's gut. It makes his hand itch to reach out and feel Will's skin, make him purr under his touch. He manages to shake the thought off, but once again he is glad when Will leaves him to his thoughts.

He can't have Will. He can't kill him, either.

That is why Tobias Budge is a blessing.

Whatever the outcome of his encounter with Will, it will make Hannibal's life that much easier. Budge will most likely rid him of Will, of the eventual complications Hannibal's feelings might lead to. Either that, or Will is going to kill again, to get another taste of it, take another step closer to what he is truly meant to be.

It's a good plan. Would have worked quite well, if only Hannibal were able to remain indifferent about the idea that Budge has indeed killed Will.

The few seconds that separate Jack's entrance from Will's weigh heavy in Hannibal's chest, and he is surprised he doesn't collapse when he sees the omega enter his office, alive and well and *relieved*. Hannibal manages to keep himself at bay, more or less. He seems some of his agony reflected in Will's eyes but he manages to ignore it and to calmly answer Jack's questions.

None of them realize that Hannibal is barely keeping himself from growling until everyone leaves his space, everyone but his omega. That he wants to grab Will by the neck and pull him closer and hold him there until he's sure that he smells of no one but his alpha. That he would tear apart anyone else who would try to harm him.

Losing him is out of the question.

So is having him, still. But that can change.

A proper courtship is in order.

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